

Findings from CARE Consortium added to global repository for brain injury data

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Thomas McAllister, MD, is the leader of the CARE Consortium's administrative operations center. Credit: IU School of Medicine

Data from the world's most comprehensive concussion study is now publicly available in a repository aimed at providing traumatic brain

injury researchers access to a wealth of new knowledge.

The U.S. Department of Defense announced recently that data from the NCAA-DoD Concussion Assessment, Research and Education (CARE) Consortium is now available through the Federal Interagency Traumatic Brain Injury Research (FITBIR) informatics system.

Developed by the National Institutes of Health and the Department of Defense, the goal of the FITBIR informatics system is to help share data across the entire traumatic brain injury research field, and to make collaboration between laboratories easier than before.

With this addition, data from the CARE Consortium comprises nearly two-thirds of the entire FITBIR informatics system.

"An unprecedented amount of data on the short-term effects of concussions has been compiled through the CARE Consortium. Now that knowledge is easily accessible by investigators from around the world," said Dr. Thomas McAllister, chair of the Department of Psychiatry at IU School of Medicine and the leader of the study's administrative operations center. "All of these findings can help researchers start to answer important questions about concussion, and continue to grow the footprint of the CARE Consortium on advancing concussion science."

The CARE Consortium was established as part of the broader NCAA-DoD Grand Alliance in 2014, with the twin goals of understanding how concussions and repetitive head impacts affect the brain while identifying ways to improve diagnosis, treatment and prevention. The DOD support for CARE comes from the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs through the Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury Program under Award No. W81XWH-14-2-0151.

Led by Indiana University School of Medicine, the University of Michigan and the Medical College of Wisconsin, in collaboration with the Uniformed Services University, the study has collected data on more than 39,000 [student-athletes](#) and cadets at 30 colleges and military service academies—including more than 3,000 who have experienced concussions. This represents the largest sample of concussions ever researched in a single study.

"The continued partnership between the DoD and the NCAA to better understand the effects of concussion on athletes and service members is of high value to the military to enhance operational readiness," said Dr. Paul Pasquina, chair of the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at Uniformed Services University.

Contributing the majority of data that is included in the FITBIR system, contributions from the CARE Consortium include:

- 88,286,447 data points
- 597,474 head impacts recorded from sensors embedded in helmets
- 1,216 MRI scans of concussed, exposed and control participants
- 2,719 unique blood samples for genomic and proteomic analyses

Additionally, the [consortium](#) researchers record data on demographics, medical family history, cognitive function, [psychological health](#), balance and neurological function on all participants.

"The NCAA-DoD CARE Consortium is breathtaking in its depth and breadth, and has become a model of scientific collaboration, integrity and transparency that will advance the health and safety of student-athletes, service academy members, and the public at large," said Dr. Brian Hainline, NCAA Chief Medical Officer.

Provided by Indiana University School of Medicine

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